(e) and (f) Under Sarva Shiksa Abhiyan (SSA), Government aims to cover all out of school children in the age group of 6-14 for free education. In addition,. for working children in scheduled hazardous occupations/processes in the age group of 9-14 years, Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project Scheme for free education as indicated in (d) above.

Increased unemployment in rural areas

2829. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that unemployment and under employment are on the increase in the rural areas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps taken to reach the benefits of globalization to rural areas, in order to generate employment opportunities there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRICHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Reliable estimates of employment and unemployment are obtained through quinquennial labour force surveys conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation. Last such survey for which results are available pertains to the year 1999-2000. As per these surveys, unemployment rate in the rural areas on current daily status basis was around 5.6% in 1993-94 and 7.2% in 1999-2000.

(b) Economy not growing at the intended rate and increase in Labour force during the period 1994-2000 were some of the reasons.

(c) The Tenth Plan focused on providing gainful high quality employment to the additions to the labour force with special emphasis on rapid growth of labour intensive sectors such as, agriculture, irrigation, agro-forestry, small and medium enterprises, information communication technology, tourism etc. This will help generate sufficient employment opportunities in rural areas also.